NOVEL CIA ATTORNEY

AGENT, ADMITS

5/25/67

S-I Uncovers Letter

By JOHN M'MILLAN AND HOKE MAY

Gordon Novel's New Orleans attorney today said his client worked for the Central Intelligence Agency here in early 1961.

The public statement by Steven Plotkin followed the States-Item's discovery of a letter which Plotkin said was written by Novel and apparently directed to an official of the CIA.

Plotkin reported that Novel drafted the penciled letter, which was found in the 29-

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year-old former tavern owner's one-time French Quarter apartment.

In the letter, Novel tells a "Mr. Weiss" that he wants to be taken "out of this mess" by an unspecified date in March of 1967.

Novel, whom Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison has called an important witness in his Kennedy death plot investigation, disappeared from New Orleans in mid-March.

HE WAS ARRESTED APRIL 1 AT Gahanna, Ohio, on a warrant charging him with conspiracy to burglarize an oil service company's munitions bunker at Houma in 1961.

Since that time, he has been free on $10,000 bond while fighting extradition from Ohio.

Today, Plotkin said his client served as an intermediary between the CIA and anti-Castro Cubans in New Orleans and Miami prior to the April, 1961, Bay of Pigs invasion.

Novel's role as a CIA operative was first disclosed by the States-Item in a copy-

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NEW ORLEANS STATES-ITEM

Attorney Admits Novel CIA Agent

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righted story April 25.

Garrison has charged that persons connected with the CIA became angry at Kennedy and plotted his death at Dallas. He has charged the CIA with fomenting a "monstrous coverup" and duping the Warren Commission.

PLOTKIN SAID NOVEL'S CIA WORK had "little or nothing to do with the Bay of Pigs invasion and certainly had absolutely nothing to do with the assassination of President Kennedy."

The attorney said Novel worked as what he termed "chief of security" for Garrison before "his forced departure from New Orleans."

But the lawyer declared his client actually was serving as a double agent in the employ of a "national news media."

When Novel left here in mid-March, he went first to McLean, Va., to take a lie detector test. McLean is the headquarters of the CIA.

Plotkin said Novel has tapes, photographs and other data which will be released shortly and will "prove beyond any shadow of a doubt that Mr. Garrison's investigation is a fraud and a hoax."

HE SAID NOVEL has turned the information over to a national news medium and that tape recordings and other matters in Plotkin's possession will be released in case Novel dies.

In the handwritten letter draft found in a hiding place at Novel's former French Quarter apartment, the fugitive witness tells "Mr. Weiss":

"Our attorneys and others are in possession of complete sealed files containing all information concerning this matter. In the event of our sudden departure, either accidental or otherwise, they are instructed to simultaneously release same for public scrutiny in different areas . . ."

At the same time, the letter speaks of taking "appropriate counteraction relative to Garrison's inquisition concerning us . . ."

It suggests that the business of handling Garrison may best be carried on "through military channels vis a vis the D.I.A. man."

D.I.A. is the abbreviation for Defense Intelligence Agency, an organization established by President Kennedy to supervise CIA after the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion.

Speaking of the letter draft today, Plotkin said the "letter was intended to the addressee of th letter."

"As to the contents of the letter or whether the letter was actually sent, I don't know," he added.

"NEVERTHELESS," Plotkin admitted, "the only comment is that everything in the letter as far as Novel is concerned is actually the truth."

Plotkin said the purpose of the letter was to inform "the person to whom the letter was addressed . . . of activities going on in Louisiana."

Garrison has charged that Plotkin and other lawyers representing figures in the Kennedy inquiry are being paid by the CIA. Plotkin has denied the allegation.

THE LETTER draft, which a handwriting expert says was written by Novel, is a strange concoction of clipped phrases, cloak and dagger terminology and veiled references to "top secret" activities.

It begins:

"This letter is to inform you that District (Attorney) Jim Garrison has subpenaed myself and an associate to testify before his Grand Jury on matters which may be classified TOP SECRET. Actions of individuals connected with DOUBLE-CHEK CORPORATION in Miami in the first quarter of 1961."

The recent book, "The Invisible Government," which carries details of CIA operations, identifies Double-Chek of Miami as a CIA front.

On page 79, the book declares that Double-Chek was the company through which pilots and other persons connected with anti-Castro Cuban operations were recruited.

"We have no current contact available to inform of this situation," the Novel letter draft continues. "So I took the liberty of writing you direct and appraising you of current situation . . . expecting you to forward this through appropriate channels."

Although the draft is undated, the sequence of events it relates places its writing sometime in late January or early February.

It tells of "avoiding" one Garrison subpena but says that attorneys have warned other subpenas are to follow.

"The Fifth Amendment and/or immunity (and) legal tactics will not suffice," the letter states.

GRANDMA HURT IN GAME

CARMICHAELS, Pa. (AP) —Mrs. Edna Crawford suffered a fractured left hip yesterday in a fall while playing touch football with her grandchildren and was hospitalized in satisfactory condition, hospital attendants reported. Mrs. Crawford is 81.